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Notes and News

«Switzerland buys British»... but exports textiles too!

The Ambassador, our English counterpart, whose high standard and perfect presentation are so well known, devotes twenty or so pages of its latest number (11/1951) to the Swiss market for the products of the British textile and clothing industries. This interesting series of articles, appearing under the title «Switzerland buys British», clearly shows the importance of the Swiss market for foreign exports. This market was «liberalised» without even waiting for the conclusion of agreements within the framework of the Organisation of European Economic Cooperation and the European Payments Union, and competition is free subject only to the laws of supply and demand; this is moreover the reason why so many foreign products are found here, both ordinary consumer goods and luxury

products, which fact is appreciated not only by Swiss consumers but also by foreign visitors to this country.

Although Switzerland imports finished products from abroad, it must not be forgotten that it is also a manufacturing and exporting country. Liberal with regard to other countries whose consumer goods it buys, it naturally relies on a system of reciprocity to be able to dispose of its quality articles. Among these, the products to which the periodical *Textiles Suisses* is devoted occupy an important place. As the reader may see for himself, Swiss fabrics are found everywhere, in the salons of Haute Couture in Paris, in the best London houses and in the fashion houses of California. That is why we may say that although «Switzerland readily buys foreign products...» it also exports and sells its own products all over the world.

3rd International Silk Congress

The International Silk Association, which first saw the light of day in Zurich, held its third congress in London from September 10th to 14th. Sixteen countries, among them Switzerland, were represented by some 200 delegates. The organisation of this event was perfectly carried out and the English made a great success of the whole affair, as can be seen by a glance at the British trade press.

We cannot discuss at any length in these notes the work of this important meeting and the decisions that were made there. Let us simply draw attention in passing to the vast campaign in favour of silk that is shortly to be launched and the Japanese plan aiming at the stabilisation of the prices of raw silk, the benefits of which will be felt throughout the whole silk market.

Bicentenary of Embroidery at Saint-Gall

As recently pointed out by the *Textil-Revue*, our contemporary in Zurich, from which we have taken the following information, it is two centuries now since the embroidery industry was introduced into Saint-Gall. The authors, who are agreed as to the date of 1751, differ however as to the manner in which the art of embroidery was actually introduced into eastern Switzerland. Some hold that it was some merchants of Saint-Gall living at Lyons, or visiting that town on the occasion of one of its fairs, who saw two Turkish women embroidering on silk. The idea came to them of having the same work carried out at home on white

cotton fabrics, and they either brought back with them to Saint-Gall the two Turkish women or a woman to whom these two had taught their art. Another chronicler tells us that embroidery was introduced by a local woman who had learnt it in a convent in the south of Germany. This second version does not seem to be based on much fact, although it is known that embroidery was carried out at the time on canonicals in convents in Germany and Switzerland. Whatever may be the origin of this main industry of Saint-Gall, the manufacturers of this speciality may well be proud of a two-centuries' old tradition.

19th Swiss Export Week

Manufacturers of dresses, coats, suits, blouses, skirts, sportswear, raincoats, jersey and knitted wear, etc. — forty-four firms in all — showed their 1952 spring and summer collections in Zurich from November 19th to 24th.

As far as we can tell from a brief enquiry — rapid and superficial it is true — the results seem to have been rather varied. Some firms do not seem to be entirely satisfied with the business concluded, but most of them however

declared themselves to be delighted with the presence of so many buyers and with the sales recorded. Particularly noticeable were the usual large contingent of firms from Holland, the Belgian buyers, the Swedes and Germans, all inspired with a great desire to buy; but there were also clients from England, France and other countries. Naturally it is still too early to obtain detailed and reliable infor-

mation on the way business went. As for the collections themselves, they seem to us to confirm what has been said elsewhere regarding fabrics, i. e. that for want of any very marked changes, they bear witness to the search for new materials and new combinations of materials, worked surfaces and structural effects.

After the first centenary . . .

Pfenninger Cloth Mills Ltd., Wädenswil, have just celebrated the 125th anniversary of their foundation. This firm was founded in 1826, taking the name of Pfenninger in 1887, and after many expansions has developed into the well-known concern that it is to-day. At first it only went in for the manufacture of cloth, as its name implies and as was the case with all Swiss woollen mills. At that time it had 40 hand-looms. About 1880, it had 15 mechanical looms, and in 1914 it boasted no less than 100.

It was during the first World War that it added a small worsted spinning department. At the present day, Pfenninger, with its many years of experience behind it, is a modern establishment, producing under the best conditions all kinds of worsted and woollen fabrics for men and women's wear, and thus contributing to the good reputation of Swiss wool textiles all over the world.

We offer our congratulations and sincere good wishes to the Pfenninger Cloth Mills on this occasion.

A Jubilee

We take pleasure in drawing attention to the jubilee of Mr. Georges Steinmann-Sautter, who celebrated on October 1st, 1951 the fiftieth anniversary of his entrance into the firm of *Gattiker & Steinmann of Richterswil*, so well known to our readers.

Mr. Steinmann-Sautter who was 75 this year, still works member of the direction board, with the same energy as he did half a century ago, and *Textiles Suisses* wish to take the opportunity here of wishing him many long years of good health.

German Industrial Exhibition of Berlin

(6th - 21st of October 1951)



The stand of embroideries and fine cotton fabrics from Saint-Gall, realised by the Exhibition Department of the Textile and Fashion School of the Industry, Arts and crafts Museum of Saint-Gall (Mr. Hans Stettbacher)

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